

A sample UV protection policy for workplaces.

This sample sun protection policy is intended as a guide only. Organisations should use aspects to tailor a policy that suits the needs and practicalities of their own organisation.

***(Organisation Name)* sun protection policy**

Rationale

Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. Despite being an almost entirely preventable disease, at least two in every three Australians will develop skin cancer before they reach the age of 70. Of all new cancers diagnosed in Australia each year, 80 per cent are skin cancers.

Workers who work outdoors for all or part of the day have a higher than average risk of skin cancer. This is because ultraviolet radiation in sunlight or 'UV' is a known carcinogen.

All skin types can be damaged by exposure to UV. Damage is permanent and irreversible and increases with each exposure.

(Organisation Name) has an obligation to provide a working environment that is safe and without risks to health. This obligation includes taking proper steps to reduce the known health risks associated with exposure to UV for outdoor workers.

Aims

This policy aims to provide ongoing organisational support to reduce worker exposure to UV by implementing appropriate sun protection control measures.

Our commitment

(Organisation Name) will conduct a risk assessment in consultation with health and safety representatives and workers to identify workers who have a high risk of exposure to UV, and work situations where exposure to UV occurs.

(Organisation Name) will reduce workers' exposure to UV by requiring outdoor workers to use sun protection measures at all times. Everybody else is required to use sun protection when outside during daily sun protection times (when UV Index is 3 and above).

(Organisation Name) recognises that supervision of outdoor workers and monitoring of the use of sun protection measures is required to ensure compliance.

(Organisation Name) recognises that standard company grievance procedures will be initiated where a worker fails to comply with sun protective measures.

(Organisation Name) will ensure injury reporting procedures are followed when an incident of sunburn or excessive exposure to UV occurs in the workplace.

(Organisation Name) recognises that a combination of sun protection measures, which includes engineering and administrative controls and personal protective equipment and clothing, provides the best protection to workers from exposure to UV.

Management will:

Engineering controls

- provide shaded areas or temporary shade where possible
- encourage workers to move jobs where possible to shaded areas
- consider applying window tinting to work vehicles
- modify reflective surfaces where possible
- identify and minimise contact with photosensitising substances
- provide indoor areas or shaded outdoor areas for rest/meal breaks
- consider shade for all outdoor events
- consider shade in plans for future buildings and grounds.

Administrative controls

- schedule outdoor work tasks to occur when levels of UV are less intense, such as earlier in the morning or later in the afternoon
- schedule indoor/shaded work tasks to occur when levels of UV are strongest, such as the middle part of the day
- rotate workers between indoor/shaded and outdoor tasks to avoid exposing any one individual to UV for long periods of time
- provide daily access to the UV forecast and sun protection times (available from BOM, SunSmart or ARPANSA)
- adopt sun protection practices during all work-related outdoor social events.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) and clothing

- provide outdoor workers with the following PPE, covering as much skin as possible, which must be worn when working outdoors, and be chosen in consultation with workers:
 - long-sleeved shirt with a collar made from material with an ultraviolet protection factor (UPF) of 50+
 - long trousers made from UPF50+ material
 - a sun-protective hat that shades the face, head, ears and neck, is made from UPF50+ material, and is in a broad-brimmed, bucket or legionnaire style
 - attachable brims and neck flaps when wearing a hard hat
 - broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen and lip balm with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or higher, that is applied generously 20 minutes before going outdoors so that it can be absorbed, and reapplied at a minimum of every two hours
 - sunscreen and SPF30 lip balm is stored in a cool place (below 30°C) to prevent deterioration and reduced effectiveness) (the expiry date on the bottle is checked and adhered to)
 - sunglasses that are close fitting, have a wrap-around style and have an eye protection factor of 9 or 10, or meet Australian Standards (AS/NZS 1067) or safety glasses rated “O” (AS/NZS 1337.1).

Education and training

- provide training to workers to educate about the risks of working outdoors and enable them to work safely in the sun
- ensure training is provided as part of induction for new workers
- ensure workers are provided with information to effectively examine their own skin
- inform workers of tax deduction entitlements for sun protective work equipment
- promote sun-protective behaviour in prominent areas as a reminder to staff
- ensure managers and supervisors act as positive role models
- adopt sun protection practices during all company social events
- promote the use of sun protection measures ‘off the job’.

Workers will:

- co-operate with all measures introduced by management to minimise the risks associated with exposure to solar UV
- comply with instructions and advice in regards to the use of sun protection control measures
- participate in sun protection education programs
- act as positive role models
- be responsible for their own sun-protective practices at work
- report incidents of UV overexposure, including sunburn of the skin and photokeratitis of the eye.

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis, or at least every three years. Policy changes will be communicated to all staff.

Name (please print): Position:

Signature: Date: Date of next policy review:.....

